

M E R C A T O R:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Tuesday, September 8. to Thursday, September 10. 1713.

*The Opposers of the Treaty driven to desperate Shifts to support their Cause.**They forge the Story, that by this Treaty our Wooll is to be Exported to France.**They have made many People believe it, who, it was never believed, could be so ignorant.**The Delusion of it detected and exposed.**It is a Disgrace to their whole Cause, that they are obliged to have Recourse to such Absurdities.**To bring a Falshood to Confirm a Truth, renders even that Truth it self suspected.*

THE Opposers of the Treaty of Commerce with France finding Arguments fail, and that Truth will not support their Design, have feigned the most successful Falshood, and the most likely to delude, tho' the most easy to be detected of any thing, that could be imagined: This is to persuade the poor People, that by this Treaty the British WOOLL was to be Exported to France, the Laws to forbid the same being, as they FALSLY say, to be Repealed among the Prohibitions, which are to be taken off by the Treaty.

The Forgery for this is a Forgery indeed, and of the first Rate, has but too well answered their End, for it has deceived such Men, as any Man of common Charity would think were not to be Deceived, much less to be so grossly Imposed upon.

However false and absurd, nay however unlikely to be true this Story has been, it has had a greater Influence among the poor People in Britain, than any true thing that they have been able to say; which is a certain Sign of the Power of Popular Delusions.

It is also a sign, that this known Falshood has been affirmed with a great deal of Assurance, it might have been said Impudence; but the *MERCATOR* cares not to borrow any of their hard Words. It is impossible any People should take in such an absurd thing, if they were not fac'd down in it by the Power of uncommon Boldness, and thereby made to believe against their own Reason, and even against Common Sense.

It shews too, what an unhappy Easiness there is among the People of this Kingdom, in believing any thing, that comes with the Assurance of a Party-Relator, and in suffering themselves to be Imposed upon in things of the greatest Consequence imaginable.

Besides this, the Success of this Delusion affords the following Remark; (viz.) That the Opposition to the Treaty of Commerce wants the Support of Truth and Justice, and that it must be maintained by the Strength of Fiction, boldly affirming Things false in Fact, and backing those Affirmations with the grossest Suggestions, without Ground, without Reason, without Probability, representing false Things as true, and true Things in a

false Light. This Politick Fraud we are now speaking of, is of this kind; it is a meer Clamour to raise the Mob, and if possible, to bring the Rabble over to a Party; like the Paper call'd *The Prince of Orange's Second Declaration*, which though they agreed it did the Service it was designed for, yet the Prince himself never knew a word of its making: So these People; they have no Foundation for the Clamour! not one of their Authors, though some of them will go Lengths, that no honest Man can justify, yet not one of them has ventur'd to say in Print, that our Wooll is to be Exported by this Treaty; they dare not say so; not that they stick at the Falshood, as appears by their spreading it by word of mouth, but they dare not for fear of being Punished as such a Slander deserves. This is something like the Justice of the Inquisition, who when they bring out the poor Victims, who they have sentenced to some cruel Death, dress them up in Habits like Devils, and call them Enemies of God, that they may reconcile the People to the Cruelties, which the poor Wretches are to suffer: But among Protestants, such kind of Justice has been esteemed the highest Injustice.

One would think, there should be no need to Answer such an open and self-contradicting Story as this we are speaking of, and that no true Britain could be so weak as to Believe it: The Story seems like telling the poor People, as was lately said by another Author, that London-Bridge was to be Exported to France: In a word, it is a Story they will all be asham'd of, who believe it; and much more ought they to be asham'd of it, who told it.

It is not only false, but it has such Circumstances of Falshood in it, as makes it wonderful, that such a thing can be suggested, a thing, which must of course be immediately detected and exposed; a Story, that no one could tell twice over without discovering it self, and which could hardly be carried from one Town to another, but it would be contradicted.

If they had charged Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries with some probable thing, they might have expected it might have pass'd a while for a Truth, and have admitted some Debate for the clearing it up; but to report that

that the Government should agree to the Exporting the WOOLL! it may be as well suggested, that they had agreed to Export our Wives and Children, nay their own Wives and Children; for this is sure, that except our Wives and Children, and our Bibles, there is not a Moveable in the Nation, but what we ought to Export before we Exported our WOOLL.

Had our Plenipotentiaries done such a Thing as this, it must certainly have been a Volunteer; a Free Gift to the French King: for none of the French Plenipotentiaries could be Foolish enough to ask it; and it might be Vouch'd for them, that they had it not in their Instructions. The French Councils are not so void of Sense, as not to know it was not a Thing to be thought of; and the French King might as well have ask'd Her Majesty to have given him the Tower of London.

What may not the Spirit of Parties, when it possesses a Nation, Impose upon them? And what is there so Gross, but Men prejudic'd and willing to be Impos'd upon, will Drink in? If such a Thing as this may go down with them, what can they stick at?

This is the Reason and true Original of this Paper: The *MERCATOR*'s Business is to restore Men to their right Knowledge of these Things; to undeceive the abused People; to detect the abominable Fallhoods, that are spread about for private Designs among them; and to Inform them rightly in Things, wherein they are abused and misled.

We need go no farther for the Reason and true Original of the Displeasure of some People against, and the restless Attacks they make upon the *MERCATOR*; were the Truth on their Side, and the Delusion ours, they would quietly wait till the Event supported their Suggestions, and exposed what we lay down: But, conscious of their Guilt, they fly to these Shifts, and support what they engage in by spreading false Rumours, and holding out false Lights to the People, that they may first be Amused, and then grossly Impos'd upon.

The good People of Britain may be assured no such Thing, as Exporting our WOOLL, was ever nam'd in the Treaty: No such Thing can be inferred from the Treaty: No such Thing was ever intended by the Treaty: The Government would be very glad to receive any rational Proposal for the more Effectual preventing the Exportation of our WOOLL: Nor have they ever declined doing every thing, that was in their Power to prevent it: But to allow the Exporting it, was never so much as in their Thoughts.

All the Laws, that were in Force against the Exportation of Wooll, when this Treaty was begun, are in Force still, and will remain in Force, notwithstanding this Treaty, or any one Article of it. It is true, the Treaty conditions, that all Prohibitions of French Goods in Great-Britain, shall be taken off and Repealed; but then the Limitation of Time is to be taken with it, (*viz.*) to the Year 1664. which, it is plain, can no way affect the Acts for Prohibiting the Exportation of Wooll, the principal of which was made in the Year 1662. (*Viz.*)

It will appear very strange to considering Men, to think, what Men should propose to themselves, by spreading so gross a Fallhood as this of Exporting our WOOLL, and how they should expect any one should be brought to believe it. The Improbability of the Thing, its being so contrary to Reason, and the Nature of our Trade, makes the suggesting it Irrational: To Export our Wooll had been so barefaced an Invasion, not of the Law only, but of the Reason of the Law, such an Attack upon the Interest of every private Tradesman, as well as upon the whole Body, that it cannot be imagin'd, but that every true Friend to Commerce would take Fire at the Thing, as soon as they came to hear of it. But yet, as this makes the Thing improbable to be true, and discovers

the Malice and Evil Design of suggesting it to the World; so it shews the Reason of the Parties making use of so gross a Calumny, (*viz.*) That if they can prevail on the ignorant People to believe it, whether it be true or no, that matters not, it will be sure to Alarm them, and make them Uneasie; and this is what at this time serves a Turn, as well if it be false, as if it be true: For this Reason, we say it is, that the Attempt is made, (*viz.*) First, To make the People receive the Delusion, and then they are certain to be Enraged at the Expectation of it.

It is not to be wonder'd at, that the poor People are Enraged and Alarm'd, when they are made to believe the Truth of this Story. But as the Knavery lies on one Hand, in the spreading such a false Story for Truth, and in the Design of deceiving the Nation, so neither can the People be clear'd from the Charge of the grossest Folly, in taking in such sordid ridiculous Tales, and suffering themselves to be moved into Mobs and Tumults, by a Story so absurd, that a Child ought to be Corrected, if it should believe the like.

To conclude, How must this at last fill Mankind with the utmost Contempt of these Men? How must it raise Indignation against them, in the Minds of all Honest and Impartial Men? How must it expose their other Measures, and render them all suspected? When a Man is Guilty of a Forgery in one Thing, it lessens the Credit of every other Thing he offers; he that has Impos'd on me in one Thing, it is no Breach of Charity for me to doubt, that he designs to Impose upon me in another.

But these Men care not for this, the Design is to serve a present Turn; and if they can bring that one Thing they aim at to pass by it, they will bear all the Reflections of Injustice, Imposing upon the People, Forging a false Accusation, and the like, as Things much inferior to the main Design they are carrying on.

If this Story of Exporting our Wooll is false, and without ground, then one would think it should lessen not the Reputation of the People, who say it, but the Reputation of all the rest, which they say in this Cause: And it does not seem to be Unjust, that we should believe all the rest to be as false as that.

It is generally a false Story it self, which requires a false Story to support it. If the Objections, which they raise against the Treaty, were just in themselves, they could not want false Things to support them; and we may very justly suspect the Truth of all they say, when they go about to strengthen it with an Absurdity, a Story, which confutes it self, and which must, in the End, make them ashamed of themselves.

BOOKS Printed for W. Taylor, at the Ship in Pater-Noster-Row.

- (1) *Poems on several Occasions: Written by a Lady, Author of the SPLEEN, &c.* (2) *A Demonstration of the Existence, Wisdom, and Omnipotence of God; Drawn from the Knowledge of Nature, particularly of Man, and fitted to the meanest Capacity, by the Lord Archbishop of Cambray, Author of Telemachus.* (3) *Boetius of the Consolation of Philosophy, in Five Books: Made English, and Illustrated with Notes, by the Right Honorable Richard, Lord Viscount Preston.* (4) *The Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, &c. in 6 Vol. 80. Illustrated with near 100 Cuts, done by the best Hands.* (5) *Mr. Archdeacon Hill's Harmony of the Canonical and Apocryphal Scriptures, in Answer to Dr. Clark, &c. Also his compendious Speculations on Valid and Invalid Baptism, and concerning Sacramental Remission of Sins.*

Just Publish'd the Second Edition of

THE Honour and Prerogative of the Queen's Majesty Vindicated and Defended against the Unexampled Insolence of the Author of the *GUARDIAN*: In a Letter from a Country Whig to Mr. Steele. Printed for John Morphew, near Stationers-Hall. Price 3 d.

LONDON: Printed for BENJ. TOOKE, at the Temple-Gate; and JOHN BARBER, on Lambeth-Hill. (Price 3 Half-pence.)

